

Vegetables

Selection and Preparation For Display



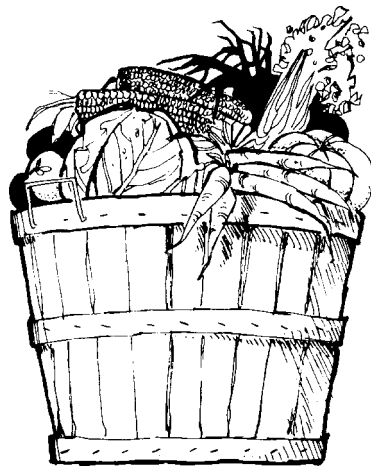
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College of Rural Alaska

Cooperative Extension Service

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Vegetables are an important part of Alaska's fairs. This publication will help you do a better job of selecting and exhibiting vegetables. Experience in selecting and exhibiting vegetables will help you to gain know-how and to achieve success with these products.

Good exhibits attract attention and stimulate interest in Alaska grown vegetables. The exhibit is a demonstration of achievement.

Remember—The judge must place your vegetables as they are when he sees them. Because of the long distances encountered in Alaska, and the time involved, the vegetables you select may look much different when they are judged. The judge can only place your exhibit according to its condition.

THE EXHIBITOR

In addition to producing a good product, an exhibitor must know how to select a "show" sample, how to prepare the sample, and how to show it to its best advantage.

General Rules

1. Read the show rules carefully.
2. Follow the rules. If the exhibit calls for six specimens, do not enter five or seven. (It is best to take at least one extra specimen with you as a replacement in case of damage or loss.)
3. Decide ahead of time what you can exhibit.
4. If possible, get the perishable vegetables ready the same day the fair opens. The fresher they are, the better they will stand up at the fair. Refrigerator storage until shortly before exhibit time will insure freshness.
5. Carry exhibits to the fair in a way that will protect them from bruises and preserve their garden freshness. Wrap tomatoes separately in paper and pack them loosely in a box which has excelsior or crumpled paper on the bottom. Wrap vegetables in wet burlap bags and keep them moist.
6. Be on time in making your entry. Leave home in plenty of time, so that any short delay will not make you late.

THE EXHIBIT

It is important to select vegetables for show that are uniform in size, shape, and color, and are free from insect, disease, or mechanical injury.

Preparation

The specimens should be clean; it adds to the appearance of the exhibit. Remove excess soil by brushing or washing. Avoid scrubbing; it can injure the outer skin.

Generally, root crops need to be washed. Leafy vegetables may be dipped or sprayed to remove dirt, dust, or any foreign materials.

Peppers may be wiped with a damp cloth. Be careful and do not injure or bruise the specimens.

Uniformity

One of the most important factors for a winning exhibit is uniformity. The specimens should be as identical as possible in size, shape, color, freshness, and degree of maturity. Choose your finest vegetable and select others like it.

Quality and Condition

Cultural perfection and degree of maturity are the main points to consider in selecting vegetables for exhibition. The condition or degree of maturity should be at its best for good eating. Entries should not be overripe, wilted or immature. For cultural perfection, the entry

should be free from insect or mechanical injuries, cracks or blemishes, disease spots or wilt, and mold.

Size

The size should be medium to slightly larger, or the size most commonly sold in standard commercial markets. Large sizes may indicate over-maturity, coarseness, or poor quality. Too small a size indicates immaturity, and specimens will soon wilt and collapse.

Vegetables which have high quality will also have high food value and will be in the best condition for table use, as well as for exhibition purposes.

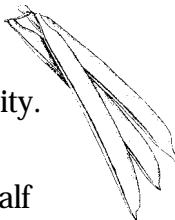
Quantity

The exact number of specimens required for a vegetable exhibit must be shown or the entry will be disqualified. Specimens cut or mutilated in judging may be replaced after judging.

VEGETABLES

Beans: 1 pint or 1 pound

1. Wax and green beans must be clean, firm, crisp, and free from blemishes.
2. Pods should be long, straight, or uniform length, color, and maturity.
3. Ends should not be broken off in picking; seeds should be about half grown.
4. Avoid dull and wilted beans. This condition indicates stringiness, toughness and poor quality.



Beets: 5 on each plate

1. Beets should be uniform in size, shape, and color; smooth and free from side roots, cracks, or blemishes.
2. Tap root should be small and not too fleshy.
3. Flesh, when cut, should be firm, crisp, and fine grained. Avoid stringiness, which indicates over-maturity.
4. Medium sized or table beets, $1\frac{1}{2}$ - $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, are preferred for slicing beets. Pickling beets should be $\frac{3}{4}$ inch to one inch in diameter.
5. Tops should be cut off leaving one inch of stem. Carefully trim off any side roots, and cut tap root to $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch in length.



Broccoli: 1 bunch (3 to 4 inches in diameter at head)

1. No more than three stems may be tied together and presented as one bunch.
2. Stems should be five or six inches long. Carefully remove loose side branches and large leaves by cutting close to the main stem.
3. Heads should be compact, dark or purplish-green in color, depending on variety.
4. Avoid any yellowing of flowers in head. This indicates over-maturity and lack of quality.
5. Entries must be free from insects, insect damage, or damage caused by wilting or injury.



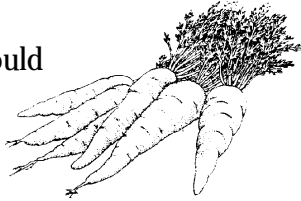
Cabbage: 1 head

1. Head should be firm, heavy for size, not withered or soft, and free from insect or disease damage.
2. Midribs should not be too large. Leaves should not be trimmed too closely. Three wrapper leaves should be left after trimming. Leave core about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch long to hold leaves firmly.
3. Head should be of best commercial size and weight (3-5 pounds.)



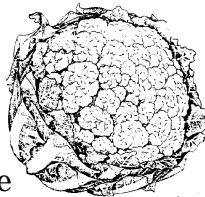
Carrots: 5

1. Specimens should be typical of their variety.
2. Select carrots that are smooth, clean, straight, fresh, firm, crisp, and of color characteristics of the variety. The carrots should be free from sunburn (greening at top). There should not be any side roots, cracks, deformities, or mechanical injuries.
3. When cut, the core should have the size, color and firmness characteristic of the variety.
4. Avoid oversize or coarse specimens.
5. Do not trim tap roots. Carefully trim off side roots.
6. Remove top, leaving one inch of stem on the leaf (unless specified otherwise).



Cauliflower: 1 head

1. Leave the outer green leaves, as this is the only protection of the cauliflower's snowball head. Heads should be white, solid, uniform, and smooth (close-flowered).
2. Do not trim the butt (core) too closely; leave four to six leaves. Trim the green outer leaves to one inch above the head. Trimming should be done just before showing.
3. Heads should not have leaves or discolored buds. They should not be over-mature or show any ricing, that is, the development of the flower bud, causing a rough surface.



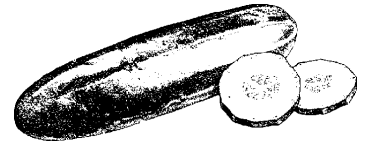
Celery: 1 bunch

1. Roots should always be removed. Trim the butt to form a triangle or pyramid. Avoid cutting too closely.
2. Avoid split, pithy, woody, or stringy stalks.
3. Heads must be clean and free from rust defects or mechanical injury. Trim off outside stalks until the color is uniform.



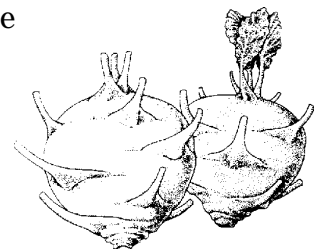
Cucumbers: 3

1. Cut fruit stems neatly and squarely at end of fruit.
2. Quality is very important. Each specimen should be crisp, fine-grained, and have true varietal shape.
3. Cucumbers should be uniform in size, color, with color characteristic of the variety.
4. Avoid specimens with mature seed. These are overripe for table use.
5. Overripe cucumbers are generally puffy, yellow, or dull in color.



Kohlrabi: 3

1. Roots should be removed just below the ball. Leave four to six upper leaves trimmed to three inches in length. Specimens should be two to three inches in diameter.
2. Specimens should not be hard, woody, or pithy.
3. You should be able to puncture the skin easily with your thumbnail.
4. Clean, but do not wash.



Lettuce, Head: 1 head

1. Heads should be fresh, crisp, firm, fine-textured, and uniform in size.
2. After cutting the heads, remove the outer leaves by pulling them off. Leave a core about one-quarter inch long.
3. Loose wrapper leaves should be removed just before showing.
4. Keep lettuce cool at all times, but avoid using too much water on it.
5. Be careful to avoid broken ribs, tip burn, and sliminess.



Lettuce, Leaf: 1 plant

1. Select plant that has high quality leaves.
2. Remove loose defective outer leaves only.
3. Trim tap root to 1 1/2 inch in length.
4. Apply items 4 and 5 of head lettuce instructions.

Onion, Green: 1 bunch of 6 (tied)



1. Select tender, medium-sized stems with long, white shanks.
2. Shanks should be straight, smooth, and uniform in size.
3. Look for fresh green tops.
4. Cut roots to 1/2 inch long.
5. Remove wrapper stems to expose long, white, shank just before showing.

Onions, Dry: 5

1. Each onion should have bright, hard, dry skin and be well shaped for the variety.
2. Small basal roots should be left intact, but trimmed to 1/2 inch.
3. Do not peel to give slick appearance.
4. Necks should be small and well cured.
5. Color should be typical of variety.



Parsley: 1 bunch

1. Entries must be fresh, bright green, and free of dirt. Choose dark green plants with maximum curling.
2. There should be no yellow or discolored leaves.
3. Bunch one-half inch at butt makes an exhibit.
4. Minimum stem length 4 inches.



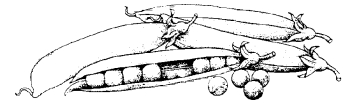
Parsnips: 5

1. Roots should be firm, smooth, well-shaped for the variety.
2. Skins should be a light creamy color.
3. Small to medium size shows best quality.
4. Trim tops to 1 inch. Carefully trim off side roots.
5. Soft, shriveled roots are undesirable and unpalatable.



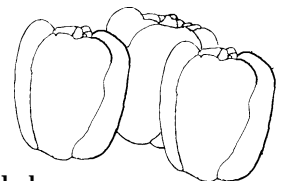
Peas, in Pods: 1 quart

1. Pods should be fresh, bright green, and well filled with tender peas. Rinse thoroughly but carefully.
2. Flat, wilted, and discolored pods indicate poor quality.



Peppers: 3

1. Entries should be fresh, firm, evenly colored and true to shape for variety.
2. Green peppers should not show any red color.
3. Entries should be free from sun scald, insect, disease, or mechanical injuries.
4. Leave stems one-half inch long for exhibition.



Potatoes: Plate of 5

1. Uniformity, shallowness of eyes, smoothness, condition, size, and trueness of type should be considered.
2. Each potato should be typical of variety in all respects.
3. Tubers must be free from dirt, insect, disease, rodent, and mechanical injuries.
4. Clean thoroughly by careful washing or brushing.
5. Avoid growth cracks, sunburn, and oversize tubers.

**Radishes: Bunch of 6**

1. Specimens should be medium-sized, smooth, firm, and crisp.
2. Entries should be uniform in size and color, and true to variety type.
3. Pressure will indicate undesirable softness or a spongy texture.
4. Trim tap root to 1 inch.
5. Do not remove tops. Tie bunch together with small rubber band at base of tops.

**Rhubarb: 5 stalks**

1. Entries should be fresh, firm, and crisp.
2. Stalks should be fairly thick, and uniformly colored.
3. Leave small portion of leaf ($1\frac{1}{2}$ -1 inch) to prevent bleeding, and tie in two places.
4. Stalks should be pulled, not cut, from crown. Sheath may be removed. Wash thoroughly.
5. Soak wilted rhubarb in ice water to restore firmness, and color.

**Rutabagas: 1**

1. Specimens should be medium size (4 - 6 inches in diameter), uniform, fresh, and of bright color.
2. Entries should be free from insect, disease, or mechanical injury.
3. Rutabagas are generally exhibited without tops. Leave stems one inch long. Carefully trim off any side roots. Wash thoroughly and carefully.

**Squash, Summer: 3**

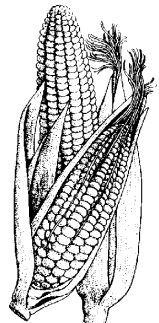
1. Pick small to medium size (8-10 inches long), when rind is soft and tender.
2. Select specimens that are uniform in size, shape, and color.
3. Brush to clean off dirt, but do not wash.
4. Leave stems about one-half inch long.

**Squash, Winter: 1, any size**

1. Maturity is important and is indicated by hardness of outer shell.
2. Specimens should be true to variety in type, shape, and color.
3. Be sure your entry is free from insect, disease, and mechanical damage.
4. Stem must be attached.

**Sweet Corn: 3 ears**

1. Select ears well filled out to the tip. Kernels should be tender and juicy. They should be in the milk stage.
2. Ears must be free from insect or disease injury.
3. Husks should be fresh and green. Dry or yellow husks indicate over maturity.
4. Pull back husks slightly to examine the quality of kernels, then smooth down.

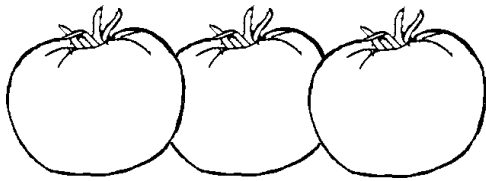


Swiss Chard: 1 bunch

1. Follow instructions for celery.

Tomatoes: 5 red

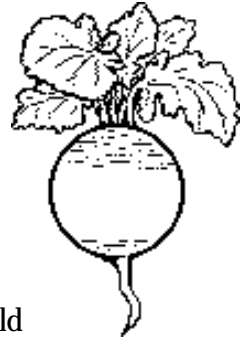
1. Garden and greenhouse tomatoes are judged separately.
2. Entries must be uniform in shape and color and be true to type and variety.
3. They should be free from cracks, insect or mechanical injury, sun scald, or blemishes.
4. Entries should be well colored, ripe and in prime condition for slicing, but not overripe.
5. No green streaks are permitted on ripe tomatoes.
6. Show ripe tomatoes without stems.
7. Handle ripe tomatoes carefully to avoid bruising or skin breaks.

**Tomatoes: 5 Green**

1. Garden and greenhouse tomatoes are judged separately.
2. Entries must be uniform in shape and color and be true to type and variety.
3. They should be free from cracks, insect or mechanical injury, sun scald, or blemishes.
4. Show green tomatoes with stems.

**Turnips: 3 White, Purple topped or Yellow
(Not small rutabagas)**

1. Entries may be white, purple topped, or yellow.
2. Entries must be uniform in size and true to type in shape and color.
3. They should be of medium size, young, tender, and mild flavored.
4. Show turnips with tops trimmed to 1 inch. Carefully trim off side roots. Trim tap root by cutting neatly at a slight angle about 1 inch below the base.
5. Each turnip should be smooth, firm, bright colored, and with few leaf scars. Wash thoroughly and carefully.



SUGGESTED FAIR PREMIUM LIST FOR VEGETABLES

Class B — Vegetables Other Than Potatoes

Exhibit of all crops show to the best advantage when **uniformity of size** and smoothness are most apparent. Side roots should be removed, leaving a well-developed taproot. All vegetables should be free from dirt. Carrots, beets, turnips, parsnips, radishes, and rutabagas should have the tops trimmed to one inch in length. All vegetables to be judged as top-quality commercial produce. Extremes in size should be avoided except as novelty exhibits. At some fairs exhibitors may be limited to a specific number of entries in any one class. In all cases, follow the specifications in the premium list.

Lot	Number or Amount
1 Beans, green	1 pint or 1 pound
2 Beans, yellow (wax)	1 pint or 1 pound
3 Beets, for table	5
4 Broccoli, 3-4 inch in diameter at head.....	1 bunch
5 Brussels Sprouts.....	1 quart
6 Cabbage, round	1 head
7 Cabbage, flat	1 head
8 Cabbage, red	1 head
9 Carrots.....	5
10 Cauliflower.	1 head
11 Celery, Golden Plume.....	1 bunch
12 Celery, Green	1 bunch
13 Chard, Swiss, leaf and stem	1 bunch
14 Corn, white	3 ears
15 Corn, yellow	3 ears
16 Cucumbers, garden	3
17 Cucumbers, greenhouse	3
18 Endive	1 plant
19 Kale	5 stalks
20 Kohlrabi.	3
21 Lettuce, head.....	3

Lot	Number or Amount
22 Lettuce, leaf.....	1 plant
23 Onion, green, bunch of 6 (tied).....	1 bunch
24 Onions, dry	5
25 Onions, pickling.....	11
26 Parsley, bunch ¹ / ₂ inch diameter at base minimum stem length 4 inches	1 bunch
27 Parsnips	5
28 Peas, in pod	1 quart
29 Peas, in pod, wrinkled	1 quart
30 Peppers.	3
31 Pumpkins	1
32 Radishes, round, red and green class.....	1 bunch
33 Radishes, long	1 bunch
34 Rhubarb, red (tied 2 places).....	5 stalks
35 Rutabagas, 4-6 inches diameter	1
36 Squash, Summer (8-10 inches best)	3
37 Squash, Winter	1
38 Tomatoes, garden, red.....	5
39 Tomatoes, garden, green	5
40 Tomatoes, greenhouse, red	5
41 Tomatoes, greenhouse, green	5
42 Turnips, table, yellow	3
43 Turnips, table, white.....	3
44 Best of collection of garden herbs	
45 Other vegetables	
46 Balanced collection of four vegetables	1 display
47 Balanced collection of six vegetables	1 display